MOKUMOKUREN

1

THE

SUMMER

HIKARU

DIED

PARDON, MA'AM.
BZZH BZZH BZZH
CHAPTER 1
CAN WE GRAB SOME ICE CREAM?
氷印アイス
HYOIN ICE
ICE
papicco
BZZH BZZH BZZH
AHH, NICE AN' COOL...
WAIT—THERE'S BARELY ANY LEFT!
Frusty-cold ice cream avail.
Yamahisa
DANG. ALL THEY GOT IS A PAPICCO.
BZZH BZ

THE SUMMER
HIKARU
DIED
MOKUMOKUREN
1
YAMAHISA
Frusty-cold ice cream avail. Yamahisa
Take your trash with you.
"ICE CREAM AVAIL.," MY ASS!
AN' WHAT THE HECK'S "FRUSTY-COLD" ICE CREAM ANYWAY?
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
BZZH BZZH BZZH
BZZH BZZH
CHAPTER 1

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BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

RIGHT. WHAT IT IS IS TOR-CHER, AIN'T IT?

STILL, CAN'T BELIEVE THAT JERK HARA MADE US RUN LONG-DISTANCE IN THIS BLAZIN' HEAT...

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

...HIKARU.

YOU SAID "TORTURE" ALL WEIRD.

OH? DID I?

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

YOU SAID IT LIKE YOU'D SAY "FOR SURE."

BUT IT'S THE SAME INTONATION AS "SCORCHER."

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

GOTCHA. TORTURE... IT'S TORTURE.

I'LL BE CAREFUL 'BOUT THAT.

BZZHBZZHBZZH

HAAH...

IT'S BEEN A WHOLE SIX MONTHS SINCE THEN. GUESS Y'AIN'T GONNA REMEMBER ANY MORE'N YOU ALREADY DO.

BZZHBZZHBZZH

NAW. NOT AT ALL.

BZZHBZZHBZZH

...SO...

...YOU REALLY DON'T REMEMBER GOIN' MISSIN' IN THE MOUNTAINS FOR OVER A WEEK?

BZZHBZZHBZZH

QUIT IT!

EVERY-ONE WAS WORRIED SICK 'BOUT YA.

IT AIN'T ALL RIGHT.

SHOVE

IT'S ALL RIGHT, AIN'T IT? HOW MUCH LONGER YA GONNA KEEP ASKIN' ME 'BOUT IT?

BZZHBZZHBZZH

SO YA MISSED ME WHEN I WAS GONE?

BZZHBZZHBZZH

BZZH BZZH BZZH
NAW.
NOT REALLY...
BZZH BZZH BZZH
YOU LIAR! YOU MUSTA CRIED LIKE A BABY. BET YOU WERE ALL LIKE, "WAAAH! DON'T LEAVE ME ALL ALONE, HIKARUUU-BOO-HOO!"
BZZH BZZH BZZH
AH!
AGAIN!?
DON'T GET CARRIED AWAY.
YA ALWAYS DO THAT, JUST 'COS YER BIGGER'N ME...
BZZH BZZH BZZH
......
BZZH BZZH
HEY.
CAN I ASK YA SOME-THIN' THAT MIGHT SOUND KINDA WEIRD?
BZZH BZZH

WHAT IS IT?
GONNA CONFESS YER FEELINGS TO ME?
NAW.
...LISTEN, THIS AIN'T SOMETHIN' THAT CAME TA ME JUST NOW.
BZZH
IT'S BEEN ON MY MIND EVER SINCE YOU WENT MISSIN' AN' CAME BACK.
SO I'VE BEEN WONDERIN' 'BOUT IT FOR A WHILE...
YOU AIN'T THE REAL HIKARU, ARE YA?

HUH?

.....

.....

...WHY...?

ZZZ...ONE

I'M S'POSED TO BE A PERFECT COPY OF 'IM...

...AH...

...DON'T TELL ANYONE...

PLEASE ...

I MAY BE BORROWIN' THIS BODY AN' PERSON-ALITY...

...BUT MY FEELIN'S FOR YOU ARE REAL...

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE LIVED AS A HUMAN.

SCHOOL, FRIENDS, ICE CREAM— I'M ENJOYIN' ALL OF THEM FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER...

I DON'T WANT TO KILL YOU...

SO PLEASE...

ぎゅっ
SQUEEZE

HEF

HEF

HUFF.
HF...
HAA...
...
AT ANY RATE, HIKARU'S NOT AROUND ANYMORE...
IF THAT'S HOW IT IS, THEN I WANT YOU TO BE
BY MY SIDE EVEN IF YOU ARE FAKE...
OKAY
...
...
"HIKARU."
NICE TO MEET YA.

HMM?

HEY, HIKARU?

HOW 'BOUT YOU, YOSHIKI?

WHATCHA GONNA DO AFTER YOU'RE DONE WITH KIBOGAYAMA HIGH?

YER SMART, SO YOU CAN LEAVE THIS BACKWATER VILLAGE AND GO TO A UNIVERSITY IN TOKYO.

HAVEN'T REALLY THOUGHT 'BOUT IT EITHER.

HAVEN'T GIVEN IT MUCH THOUGHT. PROLLY RUN MY GRANDPA'S SHIITAKE MUSHROOM FARM.

IF I DO GO TO TOKYO FOR UNIVERSITY, I'LL BE LIVIN' ON MY OWN.

SOUNDS NICE. WISH I COULD DO THAT.

PFFT! GROSS, DUDE!

HOW 'BOUT YOU GO TO HELL, THEN?

.....

OH, WAIT. OR IS IT THAT YA DON'T WANNA BE AWAY FROM ME?

IF YA DON'T WANT ME DOIN' THAT, THEN YER PLACE'LL JUST HAVE TO BE MY SPOT FOR DROPPIN' DELICES.

THE HELL IT DOES.

HA! COULD YA?

THAT'S WHEN I WAS THREE, BUT I COULD STILL DO IT NOW.

I HATE PUBLIC RESTROOMS. I JUST CAN'T DO MY BUSINESS WITH THAT MANY PEOPLE AROUND.

AN' IF I END UP IN TOKYO AND FIND MYSELF NEEDIN' TO CRAP, I'LL HEAD ON OVER TO YER PLACE.

YOU USED TO SHIT OUTSIDE, THOUGH.

AW, C'MON, MAN. Y'ALWAYS GET SORE WHENEVER WE TALK ABOUT GIRLS.

...I AIN'T GONNA GET NO GIRL-FRIEND.

OR MAYBE I'LL JUST HANG AROUND AT YER PLACE ALL THE TIME. YOU COULD GET YERSELF A CUTE GIRLFRIEND AN' EVERYTHIN', AND YOU'D NEVER BE ABLE TO BRING HER HOME 'COS I'D ALWAYS BE AROUND.

...I'M SURE YOU COULD GET YERSELF A GIRLFRIEND!

HIKARU!

OH...

YOSHIKI! WHAT'S UP?

HEY!

AHH...THIS WEEKEND'S NO GOOD FOR ME.

I'M GOIN' TO THE MOUN-TAINS...

SO, 'BOUT THIS WEEKEND...

...

.....

WELL, THING IS...

THE MOUN-TAINS?

WHY?

...IT'S A SEE-KWEHT.

AH!

CHIRP!

CHIRP!

FROM WHEN HE WAS ALIVE...

...IT WAS A DREAM.

CREAK

SO DUMB...

HEH.

THE LAST TIME I SAW HIS FACE WAS WHEN HE WAS IMPERSONATING HARA.

...

BEAT

...GH... NH... UU... HGK...

NNH...UUNH...

BAM

BAM

BAM

YOSHIKI!!! COME EAT BREAKFAST ALREADY!

SHOVE

FOR THE LOVE OF—! HIKARU'S BEEN WAITING FOR YOU, YOU KNOW!?

HURRY UP!

AH!

HANG ON...

OH, HEY, YOSHIKI...

MORNIN'.

YOU AN IDIOT?

NO TIME FOR THAT. WE GOTTA GET TA SCHOOL.

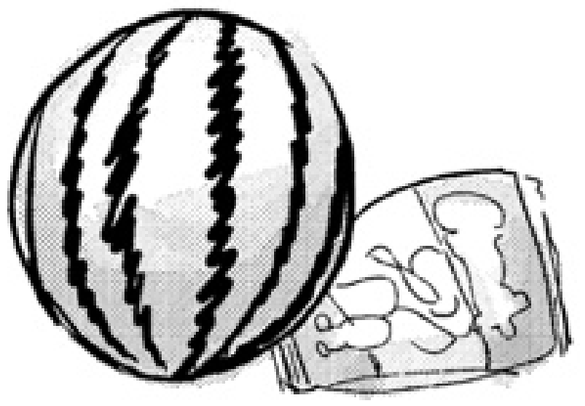
BUMP

S-SO THIS MORNIN' MY MAMA—

DON'T WANNA BE LATE.
BDMP
どき
OKAY.
WE DON' WANT OL' HARA GETTIN' MAD AT US AGAIN...
YEAH, ALL THE MORE THE REASON WE GOTTA HURRY.
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
WHATEVER YOU ARE, HAVIN' YA BY MY SIDE IS WAY BETTER THAN NOT HAVIN' YOU AT ALL...
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZ
BZZH BZZH BZ
CHAPTER 1 END

HIKARU'S FAVORITES

- WATERMELON
- SNACKS AND SWEETS AND STUFF



MORE RECENTLY, FRIED CUTLETS

YOSHIKI'S FAVORITES

- PICKLED PLUMS

HE'S NOT A BIG FAN OF SWEETS

EVEN WITH HIS STOMACH ISSUES, HE'S A GROWING BOY WHO'S ALWAYS HUNGRY

Shut up! A woman oughtta know her place!

=KRASH= Eek! What're you doing!?

Plenty of girls out there could replace you! I could marry any of them in your place!

Ohh... You're a real monster, you know that!?

CHAPTER 2

I WANNA SLEEP ...

THIS IS SO BORIN'.

SNRT!

SNIF...

GLANCE

HEY.

IT'S ALL TOO SAD. POOR THING...

HE'S CRYIN'.

IS THAT BAD?

CLACK

HUH? WHY'RE YA CRYIN' AT THIS MOVIE? 'S THE FIFTH TIME YOU'VE SEEN IT, AT LEAST.

BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME *I'VE* SEEN IT.

IT'S IN MY MEMORY, OF COURSE.

.....

BAM
BUTCHER AND DELI YAMA
SAUSAGE SKEWER 200円
HAM KATSU PORK LOIN KATSU
CROQUETTE 70円
MINCEMEAT KATSU 120円
BEEF KATSU 210円
MINCEMEAT KATSU
LIMITED SALE 10%

AH...

:MNCH:
:MNCH:

OH, WE USED TA GO OUT AN' EAT STUFF SOMETIMES, HUH!?

CRUNCH

I MEAN, I KNOW THIS FLAVOR, BUT...

WHOOOOOA!

GOOD!

IT'S SO DANG GOOD! GAWD, THAT CRUNCH!

I GOT THE SAME EXACT MEMORIES AS HIM, BUT I NEVER ACTUALLY EXPERIENCED ANY OF 'EM.

YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT.

I WAS NEVER ALIVE TO BEGIN WITH. SO IT'S MY FIRST TIME EVEN FEELIN' A CLEAR SENSE OF "ME."

YOU'RE BEIN' WAY TOO LOUD.

...STILL, IT IS STRANGE THAT IT'S NEW TO YOU EVEN THOUGH YOU REMEMBER IT.

AH HA!

I DUNNO.

A GHOST, HUH? MM... NAW, THAT AIN'T IT EXACTLY.

BUT I KNOW FER SURE I WAS SOME SORTA MESSED-UP GHOULIE. HA-HA.

...HA-HA. YOU A GHOST OR SOMETHIN'?

YUP. SURE LOOKS LIKE IT.

DID HE GET FAT AGAIN FROM ALL THE FOOD THE BUTCHER'S BEEN GIVIN' HIM?

MEW.

RUB すり

OH.

IT'S MINCE-ANIKI.

HSSSSSS!

DASH

……

YA SEE THAT? THAT CAT CAN REALLY BOOK IT, HUH!?

WA HA!

HE WAS REALLY UPSET.

MAYBE IT'S 'COS OF ME.

AN' ALL I WAS DOIN' WAS EATIN' A MINCE-MEAT CUTLET!

THAT REALLY TICKS ME OFF, Y'KNOW? GA-HA-HA-HA!

THAT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN MINCE-ANIKI THREATEN SOMEONE LIKE THAT.

HE'S DONE EATIN'.

...YOU WANNA GO ANYPLACE ELSE IN TOWN?

THE ONLY OTHER THINGS AROUND ARE THAT SHABBY DINER OR THE MION MALL, THOUGH...

OH.

HUH... YOU'LL GO WITH ME?

YA KNOW ...

...YER BEIN' REAL NICE TO SOMEONE LIKE ME...

AS NICE AS YOU'VE EVER BEEN...

I AIN'T SURE WHAT YER TALKIN' 'BOUT...

...BUT EITHER WAY, YER STILL BEIN' NICE TA ME.

...I AIN'T BEIN' NICE.

IF I MAKE EXCUSES FOR MYSELF, I CAN'T VERY WELL COME DOWN ON OTHERS.

TIK TIK TIK

BZZH BZZH BZZH

TIK TIK TIK...

TIK TIK TIK

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

IT'S A SUMMER DARTER.

A TYPICAL RED DRAGON-FLY.

BUT IT'S NOT THAT RED YET.

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

OH, A DRAGONFLY.

HUH. WHAT'S THE DIFFER-ENCE?

THIS ONE'S A SUMMER DARTER...

THE ONE ASSOCIATED WITH FALL IS AN AUTUMN DARTER.

A RED DRAG-ONFLY, HUH?

IN SUM-MER?

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

...SUMMER DARTERS AN' AUTUMN DARTERS LOOK NEARLY IDENTICAL, BUT THEY'RE DIFFERENT SPECIES.

IT'S A PAIN TO EXPLAIN.

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

HE LOOKS JUST LIKE HIKARU, BUT WHATEVER HE IS, HE AIN'T HIKARU.

JUST WHAT THE HECK IS HE?

AND I'M JUST AS CRAZY FOR ACCEPTIN' ALL OF IT...

THIS IS CRAZY.

I'M SO GROSSED OUT
I'M SO GROSSED OUT
I'M SO GROSSED OUT
I'M SO GROSSED OUT

I'M SO SCARED IT'S NOT HIKARU? HIKARU?
WHO IS IT? HIKARU? HIKARU?
IS IT MY FAULT? IS IT MY FAULT?
JUST WHAT THE HECK IS THAT THING?
I DON'T WANNA BE ALONE I'M SO SORRY
THIS ALWAYS BE SCARY YOU'LL ALWAYS BE SCARY

HIKARU

I JUST DON'T GET IT
ALREADY DEAD ALREADY DEAD ALREADY DEAD
I'M SO GROSSED OUT
I'M SO SCARED I'M SCARED IT'S
SO WHO IS IT? HIKARU? HIKARU?
IS IT MY FAULT? MY FAULT
SORRY, I'M SO SORRY
I'M SO SCARED I'M SCARED I'M SO SCARED
JUST WHAT THE HECK IS THAT THING?
IT'S SO CREEPY, GET AWAY
I WANT TO DISAPPEAR, IT'S SO CREEPY
I'M THE WORST, THIS IS SO GROSS
HE'S ALREADY DEAD

OH! THAT REMINDS ME...

UGH. THIS AIN'T GOOD ...

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

SURE.

FINE WITH ME.

SO I WAS THINKIN' NEXT TIME I COULD READ MORE OF *MASTER + MASTER* AT YOUR PLACE...

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

OH, BUT I'M MISSIN' VOLUME THREE.

ALL RIGHT. S'FINE IF YOU READ 'EM NEXT TIME YOU COME BY...

THAT'S BARELY ANYTHIN' AT ALL. YOU'RE BASICALLY AT THE OPENIN' STAGE.

RON JUST LEFT THE ISLAND!

OH, SO HOW FAR... ... DIDJA READ?

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

LATER

BUT I WAS KINDA WONDERIN' HOW COME YA GOT ELEVEN COPIES OF THE FIRST VOLUME—

NO WORRIES. I'LL FIGURE SOMETHIN' OUT FOR THAT.

NOU-NUKI-SAMA ...

DON'T TELL ME YER DOWN HERE NOOOW!

AH..AHH..

WHYYY?

EEEK! STAY BACK! GO AWAY!

WHOA. "NO MONKEY"-SAMA? THE HECK IS THAT?

SCARY.

DON'T PAY HER NO MIND.

I REALLY HATE THIS KINDA STUFF...

.....

LET'S GO.

AH!
WAIT UP!

CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK

CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK
YOSHI-KI.
SEE YA TOMOR-ROW.
CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK
...
HEY... HIKARU REALLY IS DEAD, HUH?
......
YES.

NO DOUBT ABOUT THAT.

OH, NO WAY! HE WAS BREATHIN' HIS LAST WHEN I CAME UPON HIM.

SO... DID YOU...?

...BUT IT'S ALREADY DEAD.

THIS BODY HAS A PULSE AND WARMTH TO IT...

I 'MEMBER WANDERIN' THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS FOR SOME TIME...

WAS LIKE THAT FOR A GOOD LONG WHILE— JUST NOT FEELIN' ANYTHIN'.

I WAS PRETTY MUCH LIKE A MACHINE ON AUTOPILOT ALL THAT TIME.

THEN HIKARU WAS ABOUT TO DIE...

AND BEFORE I KNEW IT, I WAS LIKE THIS...

HUH ...?

WHAT ...?

...AND YOU LIKE ME?

HE NEVER SAID ANYTHIN' LIKE THAT BEFORE. NOT ONCE.

I'M CRAZY FOR YOU.

...I DO.

IF THAT'S SO...

...THEN NEVER DISAPPEAR ON ME *EVER AGAIN.*

RATTLE, RATTLE...SHUT.

CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK

STAY AWAY !!

STAY AWAY !!

EE!

HF!

HFF!

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

I'VE GOT A DELIV-ERY FOR YOU.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN?

ZZT
チ"チ"...

I AIN'T OPENIN' THE DOOR!

AH! AHH!

HELLO? ANYONE HOOOME ?

OHH? MAYBE SHE'S NOT HERE?

BZZ...

HFFFFF.....

HFFFFF.....

HFFFFF.....

TH-TH-THERE'S NO WAY A PACKAGE WOULD COME THIS LATE!

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

YOU'RE HOME, AREN'T YOU?

WE'RE BOTH GONNA HAVE A PROBLEM IF I DON'T DELIVER THIS PACKAGE, YOU KNOW...

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

MATSU-URA-SAAAN...

MATSU-URA-SAAAN.

I'M ALREADY INSIDE.

EEEK!! I WON'T LET'CHA IN!

CHAPTER 2 END

AT ONE POINT, HE WAS INFLUENCED BY SOMETHING HE SAW ON THE INTERNET AND STARTED RESPONDING TWICE—"I SEE, I SEE"—WHEN IN CONVERSATION. HE GOT THE NICKNAME "EMIL" AFTER THAT.

WHEN SOMEONE WENT AROUND TELLING PEOPLE THAT THE MOLES ON YOSHIKI'S FACE FORMED THE SAME PATTERN AS THE BIG DIPPER, HE GOT CALLED "KENSHIRO."

CHAPTER 3

SKRT SKRT SKRT SKRT SKRT SKRT SKRT

SKRR

SO YESTERDAY IN CLUB...

YOU CAN NEVER SWEEP UP THAT LAST BIT OF DUST, CAN YA?

HEEEY, ANY OF Y'ALL UNDER-STAND THE HOMEWORK FOR MATH I?

JUST PUSH IT INTO ONE OF THE CORNERS!

HEEEY! STOP DRAGGIN' THEM DESKS AROUND!

YOU GOTTA ACTUALLY PICK 'EM UP AND MOVE 'EM!

COME ON...
...
YOSHIKI.
I'M BEGGIN' YA HERE!

NAW, DON' WANNA ...

COME ON! IT'LL JUST TAKE A LITTLE BIT!

WHYYY? NOOO!

I ALREADY TOLD YA— I DON'T WANNA MESS WITH ANY CREEPY STUFF.

HEY, WHAT'S GOIN' ON? YER BEIN' AWFULLY LOUD, MAKI...

WHAAAAAAAAAA!?

OH. YUUKI.

WHAT HAP-PENED?

WELL, YA KNOW HOW I ALWAYS TAKE THE MOUNTAIN PATH FROM THE EASTERN GATE TO GET BACK TO ASHIDORI?

YEAH, SURE.

BUT THE TUNNEL THERE'S UNDER CONSTRUCTION, AIN'T IT?

EXACTLY. THERE'S ANOTHER WAY THROUGH THE FOREST THAT I DON'T NORMALLY USE, AND NOW I GOTTA GO THROUGH THERE.

BUT THAT FOREST PATH IS SPOOKY AS HELL!

...AND THAT'S WHY YOU WANT ME TO GO WITH YOU.

...HAAH... THAT'S STUPID ...

BUT IT BEIN' SCARY AIN'T THE HALF OF IT...

I CAN'T LOOK INTO THE FOREST.

IT'S LIKE...

...MY EYES CAN'T MOVE AWAY FROM THE PATH IN FRONT OF ME.

REALLY GOTTA WONDER WHAT THAT'S ALL ABOUT!

WHOA! FREAKY !!

HUH ...?

...IS IT THAT YOU CAN'T LOOK INTO THE FOREST 'COS IT'S SCARY?

SO...

COURSE! I THREW OUT A BUNCHA TRASH.

DIDJA FINISH CLEANIN', AH-CHAN?

BUT IT'S LIKE, EVEN IF I TRY TO LOOK INTO THE FOREST, BEFORE I KNOW IT, MY EYES ARE BACK ON THE ROAD.

NAW.

WASN'T SCARY AT FIRST, Y'KNOW?

THAT'S WHAT REALLY GOT ME SPOOKED.

AND THAT'S WHY I'M ASKIN' YA TO COME WITH ME, YOSHIKI!

A TEST OF COURAGE...? THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO DO THAT ARE THE STUPID TOURISTS WHO COME THROUGH EVERY NOW AN' THEN.

YOU CAN THINK OF IT AS A TEST OF COURAGE!

NOPE.

SOUNDS WAY TOO SCARY.

YOU WERE MOVIN' LIKE YOU WERE DOIN' AN RTA SPEEDRUN.

NAW.

BUT YER SERIOUSLY GOOD AT TESTS OF COURAGE. YOU WERE AMAZIN' THE LAST TIME WE WENT.

SOUNDS REAL INTERESTIN' TO ME!

WELL, THAT'S... 'COS I WAS RUSHIN' TO GET TO A TOILET.

I WAS PLAIN SCARED AS SHIT...

I WANNA GO TOO!

HUH?

HUH?

YOU PASSED OUT FOR TWO HOURS WHEN YA SAW THAT HORROR MOVIE...

YA... YA SURE 'BOUT THAT?

YER THE WORST AT HANDLIN' THESE THINGS, HIKARU.

OH YEAH. WELL, I'VE GOTTEN BETTER WITH THAT STUFF LATELY.

AIN'T THAT RIGHT, YOSHIKI!?

OH...

YEAH.

ALL RIGHT, THEN. SO IT'LL BE YOSHIKI, YUUKI, ASAKO...

...AN' HIKARU.

I GUESS IT'S SAFER IF WE'RE ALL TOGETH-ER...

I'M SO GLAD Y'ALL ARE COMIN'. FOR REAL...

OKAY.

SEE YA AT THE EASTERN GATE AFTER SCHOOL.

ALL RIGHT, I'M STARTIN' HOMEROOM NOW.

SO, THERE WAS A DEAD BODY FOUND OVER BY KUBITACHI THIS MORNIN'.

THEY'RE SAYIN' THERE WAS NO FOUL PLAY INVOLVED, BUT THE WHOLE THING'S CAUSIN' A STIR.

WELL, DON'T BE TOO SURPRISED IF YOU SEE POLICE CARS AROUND.

ALL RIGHT.

DING-DONG

キーンコーンカーンコーン

DANG-DONG

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
YA SCARED, YUU-CHAN?
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
ZSH
ZSH
ZSH
ZSH
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
HUH? NOT REALLY... I'M NOT SCARED...
ZSH
ZSH
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
NOT 'BOUT THIS, AT LEAST. BUT THAT STUFF HARA WAS TALKIN' 'BOUT IN HOMEROOM BEFORE WE LEFT...

THEY SAY SHE STUFFED HER OWN HAND DOWN HER THROAT ...

...AN' THAT'S HOW SHE DIED.

YEAH... PRETTY NASTY WAY TO DIE, RIGHT?

...IT MIGHT BE...

JUDGIN' FROM THE HOUSE THE POLICE CARS WERE COMIN' FROM...

NOTHIN' WE COULDA DONE 'BOUT THAT.

YEAH.

JUST...

...THAT OLD LADY'S BEEN ACTIN' A LITTLE FUNNY FOR A WHILE NOW...

WE DON'T KNOW IF THAT'S TRUE OR NOT, THOUGH...

BUT THERE WAS A WOMAN NEAR THE POLICE CARS... SHE MIGHT'VE BEEN THE OLD LADY'S DAUGHTER.
SHE BROKE DOWN CRYIN'.
I FEEL BAD FOR HER.
THERE'S BEEN AN AWFUL LOT OF SCARY THINGS HAPPENIN' IN THIS VILLAGE THESE DAYS. IT'S GETTIN' TA BE TOO MUCH...
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
OH.
THAT THE FOREST PATH OVER THERE?
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
BZZH BZZH BZZH

POOR ROAD CONDITIONS. BEWARE OF FALLING ROCKS AND UNEVEN FOOTING.

LET'S GET IN THERE ALREADY.

DON'T LEAVE ME BEHIND, OKAY!?

I MIGHT DIE, Y'ALL! I MIGHT DIE!

NNNH, IT'S SCARY!

I JUST CAN'T!

OH MAAAN!

YEAH... GUESS THAT IS CREEPY.

HOW 'BOUT THAT.

...I GUESS... THAT WENT TOTALLY NORMALLY...

WASN'T SPOOKY AT ALL.

I WAS ABLE TO LOOK INTO THE FOREST NO PROBLEM TOO.

ZSH

NOTHIN' HAPPENED.

GOOD...

WHAT?

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

BE CAREFUL ON YER WAY BACK!

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

THANKS, YOU GUYS!

IT WAS ALL IN MY HEAD.

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

ZSH

ZSH

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

ZSH

BZZHBZZH

AH, A BUG BIT ME.

ZSH

BZZHBZZH

IT'S A PAIN HAVIN' TO GET BACK THROUGH THIS FOREST PATH.

ZSH

BZZHBZZH

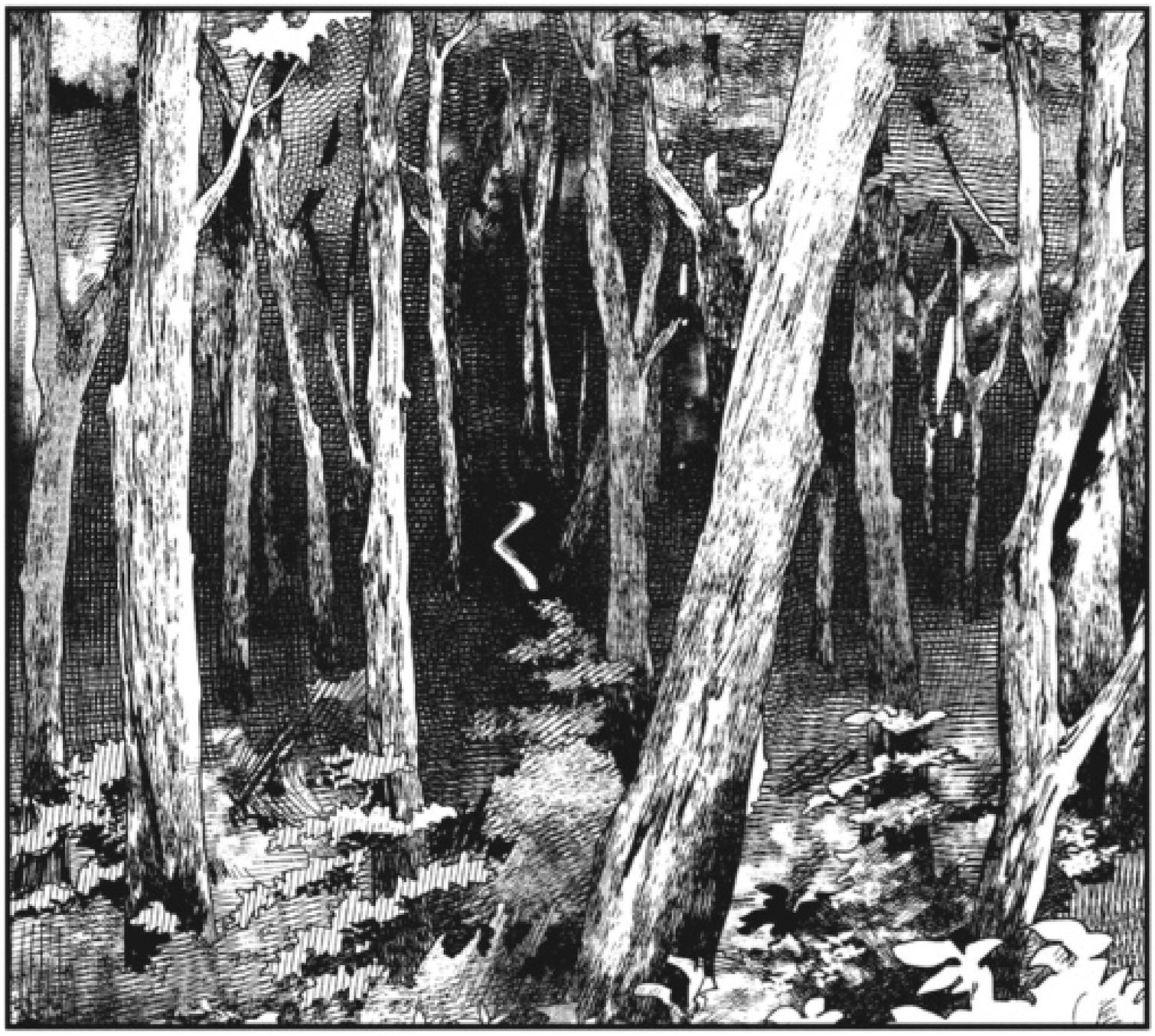
LEAST IT'S COOL IN HERE.

ZSH

BZZHBZZH

A REAL HASSLE IS WHAT IT IS!

ZSH

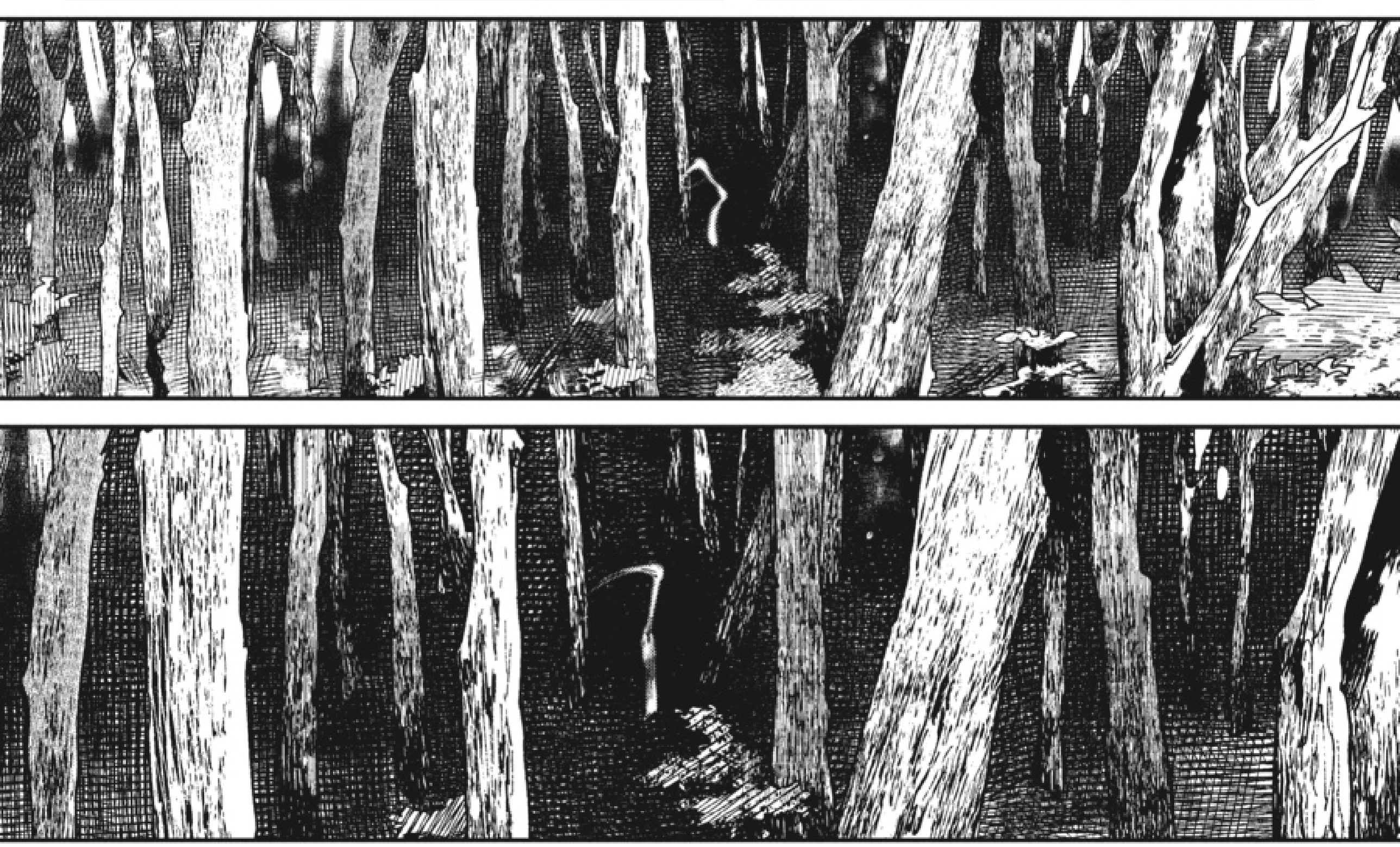


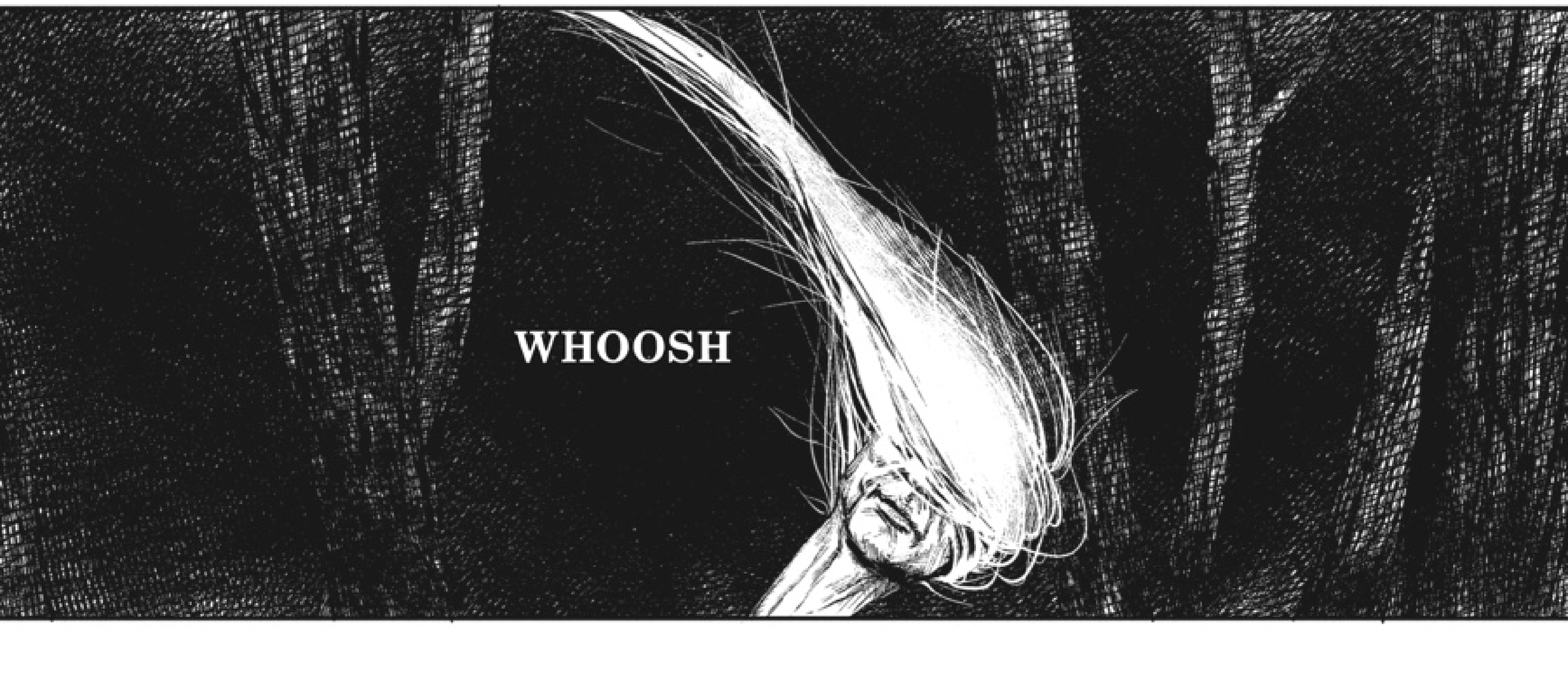
UH...
WHAT?
A LESS-THAN SIGN?

SWAY

FLIP

THE HELL IS THAT ...?




WHOOSH

IT'S...

...SWIN-GIN'...

...ITS HEAD...

...AT ME—

YO-SHIKI.

AH.

TH-THAT AIN'T GOOD.

NO GOOD.

FWIP

IT'S COMIN' FOR YA NOW.

CAN'T HAVE YA DOIN' THAT.

AH, DANG.

YOU SAW IT, HUH?

COME HERE.

VWSH

Prologue

YAAH!
WHAT!? WHAT WAS THAT SOUND JUST NOW!?

!?

AH-CHAN!?

HUH?

WHAT!?

WHAT!?
WAIT! WHERE ARE YA GOING!?

HM...

UH... AH...

YOU ALL RIGHT!?

HEY!

C'MON!

HI-KARU!

DASH

AH-CHAN!

NH...

WH—

WHAT'D YOU DO?

THAT WAS KINDA... WEIRD...

HEY.

YOU GOT A TISSUE ON YA?

NOPE.

AHH. →SNIFF!← JUST A NOSE-BLEED...

→HNK!←

SO I SMASHED IT UP AND PUT IT INSIDE ME.

THAT THING TRIED TO STICK TO YA.

...DON'T LOOK AT ANYTHIN' BUT ME.

ANYWAY, YOSHIKI...

OH.

AHH, I GUESS I SUCKED IT UP? OR SLURPED IT UP? SOMETHIN' LIKE THAT...

BUT IT PUT UP A FIGHT AND MADE MY NOSE BLEED. HA-HA.

THE ONLY THING YA GOTTA LOOK AT IS ME.

AND THE ONLY THING THAT SHOULD STICK TO YA IS ME.

THEY FOLLOW YOU WHEN YA LOOK AT 'EM.

THOSE THINGS'RE LONELY, Y'KNOW?

OKAY ...?

OH!

THEY'RE OUT!

YOU AIN'T GONNA GET IT.

JUST DON'T LOOK.

ALL RIGHT! STOP STRETCHIN' OUT MY SHIRT.

IF YOU DO LOOK AT SOMETHIN', TELL ME.

I HEARD SOME KINDA LOUD POP, THOUGH...

MAYBE A SCARE CANNON MISFIRED?

NOTHIN' REALLY HAPPENED, THOUGH.

HUH!?

YER BLEEDIN'!

HEY, SORRY FOR RUNNIN' OFF AND LEAVIN' YOU TWO BEHIND...

YEAH. I JUST TRIPPED ALONG THE WAY.

YER NOT HURT EITHER, YOSHIKI?

NO, I'M FINE.

OH... I GUESS THAT'S WHAT IT SOUNDED LIKE TO EVERYONE ELSE.

THAT EERIE FEELIN' I WAS GETTIN' FROM THE FOREST PATH IS GONE NOW.

...DID THEY CANCEL EACH OTHER OUT?

HIKARU.

IF YA REALLY LIKE SOMEONE, YA GOTTA MARRY 'EM QUICK-LIKE.

I'LL JUST GET MARRIED LIKE NORMAL.

WHAT'LL HAPPEN IF I DON'T?

UNUKI-SAMA...

...WILL TAKE 'EM INTO THE MOUN-TAINS.

IT'S AN INDOU FAMILY RULE.

IF YOU GOT YOURSELF A LOVER, YOU GOTTA HURRY AN' MARRY 'EM.

IT PROMISED NOT TO LAY A HAND ON OUR FAMILY MEMBERS...

...SO THEY'LL BE SAFE AS LONG AS YA TAKE 'EM AS YOUR BRIDE.

IT'S LONELY, SO INSTEAD OF TAKIN' ONE OF OUR FAMILY MEMBERS...

...IT TAKES THE PERSON WE CHERISH MOST.

WHY DOES IT TAKE THEM AWAY?

THAT WOMAN WHO DUMPED YER OLD MAN—AND A WHOLE BUNCHA OTHERS BEFORE HER—ARE ALL ALIVE AN' WELL...

JUST AN OL' WIVES' TALE, THOUGH!

I DON'T REMEMBER THAT ALL TOO WELL...

...BUT EVEN IF I WON'T BE TAKIN' YOU, I CAN ALWAYS BE WITH YOU NOW.

I'LL JUST HAVE TO MAKE SURE NO ONE ELSE TAKES YOU...

CHAPTER 3 END

STRENGTH IN ARM WRESTLING

HEEEY...

キュッキュッ

キュッキュッ

THMP

ドッ

THD

ドッ

2
3
4

WA
HA
HA...

THMP

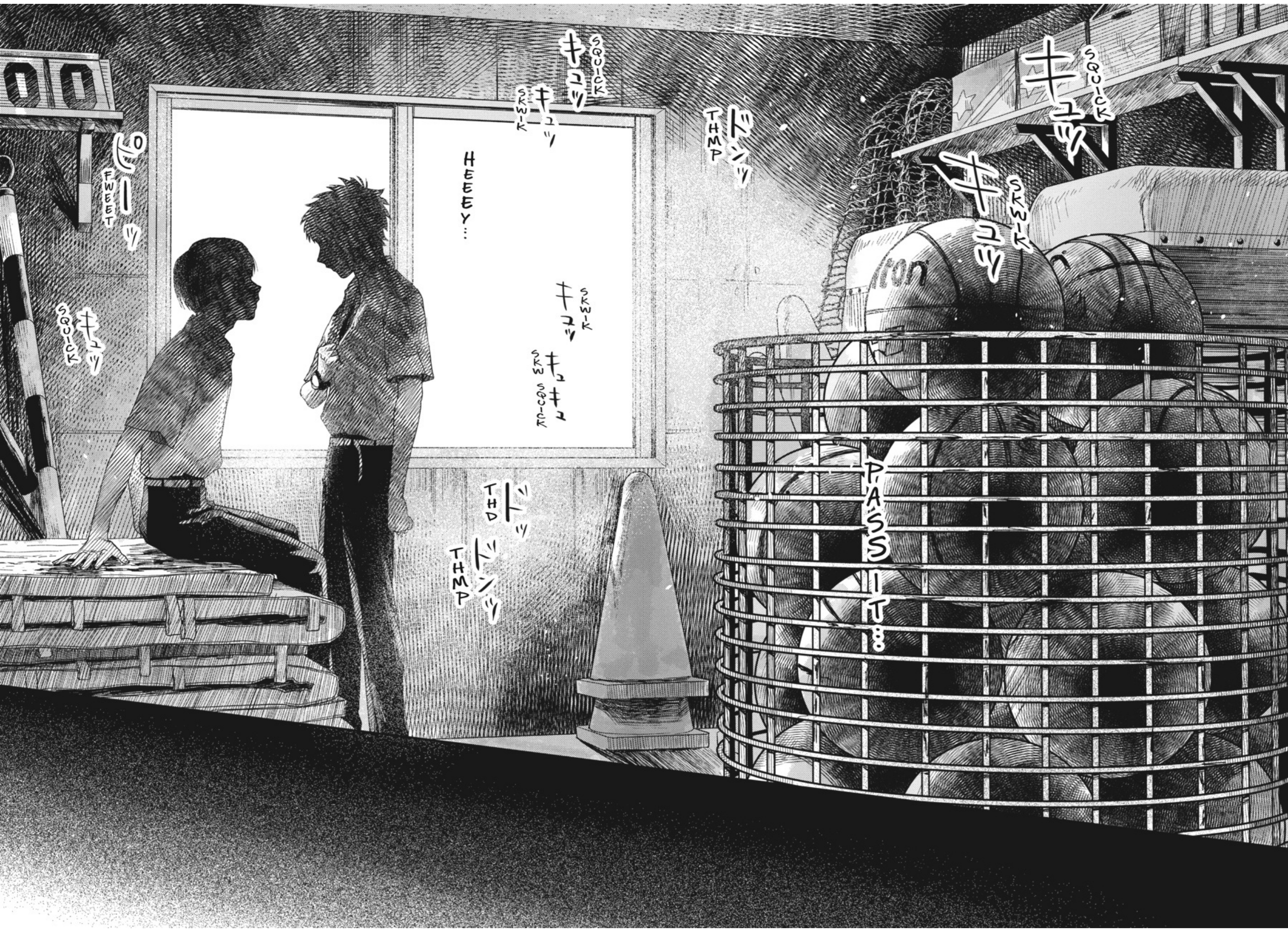
ドッ

FWEET

ピッ

キュッキュッ

CHAPTER 4


SQUICK
キュッ
SKWIK
キュッ
HEEEY...
SKWIK
キュッ
SQUICK
キュッ
THMP
トンッ
THMP
トンッ
FWEET
ピーッ
SQUICK
キュッ
SQUICK
キュッ
SKWIK
キュッ
PASSIT!!

WHUMP

Bolten

YYYYY
YYYYY
YYYYY
YYYYY
YYYYY
😢😢😢!

SORRY
YYYYY
YYYYY
YYYYY
YYYYY
YYYYY

YOSHI-KI...

...GUESS YA OUGHTTA SEE THE NURSE.

INDOU

WOW...

THAT WAS A POWERFUL SPIKE...

I'M SUPER-SORRY ...

HOO BOY, I SERIOUSLY SUCK AT ALL BALL SPORTS 'CEPT FOR SOCCER.

OOF, YOU GOT PRETTY SCRAPED UP THERE...

HUH? OH, FOR REAL?

ASAKO'S STILL SERVIN' UP SOME MEAN KILLS WITH THE BALL.

THAT THING WARPED SPACE-TIME ITSELF—LIKE THE SPACE AROUND IT WAS ALL SQUASHED UP.

I...

...HARDLY FEEL ANY PAIN AT ALL.

IS IT... S'POSED TO?

IT DOESN'T HURT?

.....

...BUT YOUR NOSE SURE DOES BLEED A BUNCH.

OH YEAH. BACK AT THE FOREST PATH...

HUH?

...THEN YOU AIN'T NO PERFECT COPY AT ALL, ARE YA...

I TOLD YOU ALREADY. I PUT IT INSIDE—

I STILL DON'T GET IT.

WHAT HAPPENED BACK THERE...?

INDOU

...I'LL SHOW YA WHAT'S INSIDE ME!

OH, I KNOW!

IF YA WANT, AFTER SCHOOL...

SQUICK

SKWIK

THD

FWEET

PASS...

HEY...

SKWIK

SKWIK

THMP

POP

THIS...

THMP

...FEELS SORTA PERVY... WHAT KINDA SITUATION IS THIS? HEH-HEH...

MAN, WHAT THE HECK?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOIN' ON.

WHY DON'CHA TRY STICKIN' YER HAND IN?

HUH?

...WH...

...WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?

HEEK!

SHMP

AH.

EUGH...

FEELS REAL WEIRD...

WHAT'S THIS SENSATION? MY HAND WENT INTO SOMETHIN'.

WAGH!?

UH.

WELL...

IT'S LIKE RAW CHICKEN COVERED IN MARINADE.

IT'S COOL INSIDE.

LIKE WHAT?

YOU'RE... KIND OF WARM.

HEY.

TRY BRINGIN' YER HAND UP MORE.

FEELS NICE.

BEEN A WHILE SINCE I'VE FELT SOMETHIN' ALIVE INSIDE ME.

ペリ PEEL…

ペリ PEEL

ペリ PEEL

GULP

IT'S THE SAME AS SOMEONE PATTIN' YER HEAD.

I'VE NEVER BEEN TOUCHED THERE BEFORE...

HN...

AH!

AHHN. FEELS GOOD RIGHT THERE...

TH-THIS FEELS GOOD TO YA?

YANK

I'M BEIN' PULLED IN!

AHH!

GNH!

AH!

ZHLRP

HAA HAA HAA

THAT SCARE YOU?

SHIT ...

AH HA HA HA HA HA!

THMP

C'MON! IT AIN'T DIRTY OR ANY-THIN'.

RUB

...

I'LL GIVE YA A SHOW THAT'LL GET YER NOSE BLEEDIN'!

JUST FOOLIN'!

FLAP

OH.

MY SHIRT?

HUH?

WAIT... WHAT'S WRONG ...?

SST

FWIP

SLAP

AH.

AH HA...

SO YA DON'T LIKE THAT...

SHRFF

WHOA!

MAYBE...

YOU SOME KINDA BAR-BARIAN OR SOME-THIN'?

HURRY'N GET YOUR CLOTHES BACK ON.

HEH. HA HA!

PING

17:35

1 new message

17:40
4G
Kaoru
Get super-spicy wasabi mustard
17:35
Or st like it
17:35
We ran out
17:35
あ か さ
た な は 空白
ABC ま や ら
改行
CONDIMENTS
PRESERVED FOOD
テーテーテ テテテ♪
DUN DUUN
DUDUDUN
テーテ テテテ♪
DUN DUUN
DUDUDUN
テテテテテー
DUDUDUDUN
テテー テテー♪
DUDUN DUDUN
テテテテテー
DUDUDUDUN
テテテテテー
DUDUDUDUN
1024
1034

THERE IT IS.

SUPER-SPICY WASABI MUSTARD

SHE'S A FIRST-YEAR IN MIDDLE SCHOOL, BUT HER TASTE IN FOOD IS LIKE AN OLD MAN.

SHE EATS A LOTTA NASTY-TASTIN' STUFF LIKE THAT.

I'LL GO AHEAD AND BUY IT...

TODAY IS 5x POINTS DAY!

5 TIMES, 5 TIMES! ♪

5x THE POINTS! ♪

OH, AND SHE LIKES THIS TOO.

BEEP

BEEP

BEEP

MY GOOD-NESS!

WELL, IF IT AIN'T THE TSUJI-NAKAS' BOY!

HOZUMI SUPERMARKET スーパーホズミ

HM?

HI.

OH.

I GUESS SHE GOT THAT CITY SCHOOLIN' TOO, HUH...? SPEAKIN' OF, YER MOTHER AND FATHER WERE FIGHTIN' BEFORE, WEREN'T THEY? EVERYONE'S WORRIED, SINCE THEY WERE ARGUIN' SO LATE INTO THE NIGHT, Y'KNOW? MUST BE A LOT FOR YA, HUH, YOSHIKI-KUN? I'M HERE FOR YA IF YA DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO, Y'HEAR? OH, THAT REMINDS ME—YA WORKIN' HARD IN PHOTO CLUB? MY SON WAS IN TRACK AND FIELD BACK IN THE DAY AND GOT SECOND PLACE AT ONE OF HIS MEETS...

IS YER LITTLE SISTER DOIN' ALL RIGHT? WELL, I HEARD SHE AIN'T BEEN GOIN' TO SCHOOL NONE TOO OFTEN, BUT...I'M WORRIED 'BOUT THE YAMAZAKIS TOO. PEOPLE'RE SAYIN' SOMETHIN' ABOUT THEIR BOY NOT BEIN' ABLE TO WAKE UP IN THE MORNIN' AN' SUCH, BUT Y'KNOW, EVERYONE HAS TROUBLE GETTIN' GOIN' IN THE MORNIN', RIGHT? KAORU-CHAN'S IN HER FIRST YEAR OF MIDDLE SCHOOL, AIN'T SHE? YA CAN'T BE SOFT ON HER. NO, SIRREE. AH WELL, YER MOTHER IS FROM TOKYO, AFTER ALL...

AH.

RIGHT.

THAT'LL BE 700 YEN.

OH, AND YOSHIKI-KUN?

YOU SHOULD CUT YER BANGS.

ALL RIGHT!

HERE'S YER CHANGE!

PRESS

CAAAW!!

MY BIKE...

CAW!!

CAW!!

スーパー

MOZOMI SUPERMARKET

スィ

VSHHH

.....

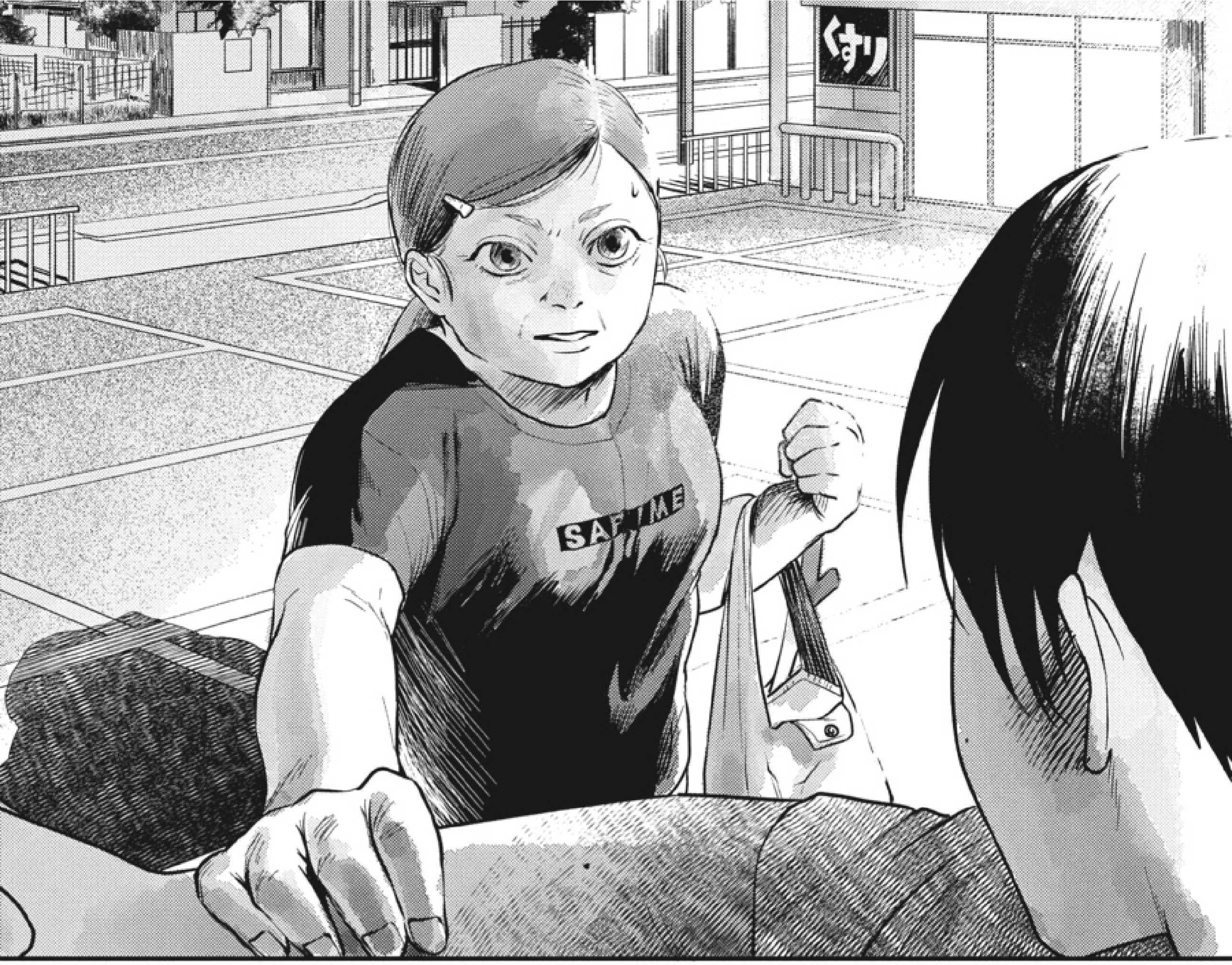
LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE MOVED IT.

CAAW!

CAAW!

CAAW...

CAAW...


SAPPME

YOUNG MAN.
YOU NEED TO STOP RIGHT THIS INSTANT.
DON'T.
DON'T DO IT.

I KNOW YA MUST BE WONDERIN' WHAT THIS RANDOM HOUSEWIFE IS GOIN' ON ABOUT.

WELL, YER CLOSE TO SOMETHIN' INCREDIBLY DANGEROUS...

DON'T TELL ME YA CAN'T SENSE THAT.

EH?

UH.

UMM ...

OH, I'M NOT TALKIN' ABOUT YER BIKE.

CHAPTER 4 END

IF YA KEEP THIS UP...

...YOU'LL MIX...

YA GOTTA GET AWAY RIGHT THIS INSTANT.

SO IT FEELS
LIKE RAW
CHICKEN IN
MARINADE,
HUH...?
WELL,
WHADDAYA
KNOW.

NOZOMI SUPERMARKET: A SUPERMARKET IN KIBOGAYAMA TOWN. THERE'S A DRUGSTORE NEXT TO IT.
スーパー
のぞみ
THIS IS THE ONLY PLACE THAT SELLS WASABI MUSTARD.
ooo

CHAPTER 5

"MIX"...?

WAIT.

ER.

UH...

UM...

WHO ...?

UM...

MM...IT'S HARD TO EXPLAIN...

YA WON'T BE HUMAN ANYMORE IF YA GET TOO MIXED IN WITH SOMETHIN' FROM THE OTHER SIDE...

IT'S JUST THAT I CAN SEE MORE THAN THE AVERAGE PERSON...

WAIT!

I REALLY AM JUST A HOUSEWIFE WHO HAPPENED TO BE PASSIN' BY!

OHH!

DON'T BE SCARED!

HAAAH...

YA KNOW THE MOUNTAINS OVER IN KUBITACHI? THAT AREA THAT'S OFF-LIMITS?

I JUST KNEW THERE WAS SOMETHIN' REAL BAD OUT THERE.

WELL, FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER, I GOT THIS NO-GOOD FEELIN' FROM THAT PLACE.

.....

I AIN'T LYIN'...

"WHERE DID IT GO? WHAT'S HAPPENED? I'M SCAAARED!" I WAS IN A RIGHT STATE, WONDERIN' WHAT WAS GOIN' ON.

BUT...

...RECENTLY, THAT NO-GOOD FEELIN' JUST UP AN' DISAPPEARED ALL OF A SUDDEN.

LET'S PROTECT OUR TOWN'S SMILING FACES AND NATURE

SHE MEANS THE MOUNTAINS WHERE HIKARU WENT MISSIN'.

...HUH...? HOW...?

DO YOU KNOW SOMETHIN'?

BUT IT'S COME TO BE BY YER SIDE, HASN'T IT?

...

...BUT YOU HAVE YER REASONS, DON'T YOU?

I'M SERIOUS... I'VE NEVER SEEN SOMETHIN' LIKE THIS BEFORE...

I DON'T.

NOT REALLY ANY-WAY.

BUT I DO KNOW THAT THINGS WON'T GO WELL FOR YA IF YA KEEP DOIN' WHAT YER DOIN'.

I'LL TELL YA EVERYTHIN' I KNOW...

IF YOU'D LIKE TO TALK ABOUT IT, CONTACT ME HERE.

...TH... ANK... ...Y...OU...

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
BZZH BZZH
Rie Kureba
Send a message
BZZ

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
HAAAAH...
BZZH BZZH BZZH
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZ
忌堂
INDOU

CREAK
CREAK
HIKARU'S IN THE BACK SLEEPIN' LIKE THERE'S NO TOMORROW.
OH, WEL-COME...
... YOSHIKI-CHAN.
RATTLE RATTLE RATTLE
IS "HIKARU" HOME?
MY, THAT'S A LOVELY ONE. THANK YOU!
HERE. I BROUGHT A WATER-MELON.
WHRR
...
CREAK

WHRR
...
...
ドカッ
THP

OW!

YER DRESSED LIKE THE MAIN CHARACTER IN SOME OLD-SCHOOL VIDEO GAME.

YOU WUSS!

YOU JUST GONNA SIT THERE AND STARE AT ME? YER NOT GONNA WAKE ME UP?

WHACK

AHHBAAH!

DAAAAA!

...GOT A WATER-MELON FROM ONE OF MY RELA-TIVES...

THEY WERE SHARIN' THEIR EXTRA.

HOORAY! I WON. DIDJA BRING SOMETHIN' WHEN YA GOT HERE EARLIER?

I'M THE BEST IN THE WORLD AT EATIN' THOSE THINGS!

HUH? A WATER-MELON!?

MY FAVOR-ITE!

...DIDN'CHA...?

YOU SAID SOME-THIN' LIKE THAT BEFORE TOO...

AND MAYBE I'LL SPIT OUT THE SEEDS LIKE A MACHINE GUN TOO!

I KNOW ...

I'M GONNA EAT IT LIKE THEY DO IN MANGA.

CHECK IT OUT! I'M GONNA EAT THIS MANGA-STYLE!

HEY, YOSHIKI!!

UGH, YER GETTIN' IT ON ME! GROSS!

CRNCH シャリ シャリ CRNCH シャリ CRNCH シャリッ

OH NO...

I SWALLOWED SOME SEEDS...

.....

HE DIED.

I HEARD MY DADDY'S FRIEND ATE SOME WATERMELON SEEDS AN' TURNED INTO A WATERMELON-MAN WITH STRIPES ALL OVER HIS BODY.

...

I SWAL-LOWED SOME TOO BEFORE.

UH...THEN WHAT HAPPENED?

GUESS WE'RE GONNA DIE...

IT'S GOT NO FLAVOR...

シャリ KRNCH シャリ KRNCH シャリ...

WHY Y'ALL CRYIN'?

GAWD, SPARE US...

EVEN THOUGH WE ATE THEM...

THEY SAID HE HAD AN ACCIDENT ON THE JOB, BUT I DON'T REALLY KNOW WHAT HAPPENED.

SPROUTIN' ANY HAIR DOWN THERE?

HE DIED WHEN WE WERE IN FIFTH GRADE...

HIKARU'S DADDY WAS STILL ALIVE BACK THEN.

WAIT.

COME TO THINK OF IT, HIKARU'S DADDY WENT TO THOSE MOUNTAINS ONE DAY A WHILE BACK...

NO ONE USUALLY GOES THERE...

AND IT WAS...

...EXACTLY THE SAME TIME OF YEAR AS WHEN HIKARU WENT TO THE MOUNTAINS...

YOSHIKI!

ムクリ…
レイナ

MAMA CUT SLICES FOR US.

YA WANNA EAT SOME WATER-MELON?

SURE IS A NICE WATERMELON.

...SO, YOU *ACTUALLY* KNOW THE TASTE OF WATERMELON?

HUGE, AIN'T IT?

YEAH, I'VE EATEN IT 'BOUT TEN TIMES ALREADY.

I UPGRADED THE WAY I EAT 'EM TOO!

AH

HH...

CHOMP

CHOMP

CHOMP

WAIT, NO. EW...

MAYBE IT WAS KINDA AWESOME.

MOW MMBT MAHT !!?

AHH, SWAL-LOWED THE SEEDS.

MNCH GULP

GUESS I'M GONNA TURN INTO A WATERMELON-MAN NOW.

NAW.

I'M GOOD ...

MAN, I'M BORED.

WANNA PLAY SOME *SMASH*?

DON'T REALLY FEEL LIKE IT.

REALLY? WELL, ALL RIGHT, THEN.

I'M GONNA GO AHEAD AN' NAP.

RING...

DING...

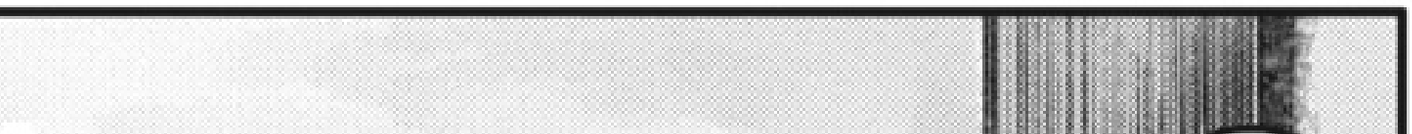
I CAN'T GO ON ACTING LIKE THIS IS NORMAL...

Y'KNOW...

THANKS FOR THE WATERMELON TOO.

...I'M REALLY ENJOYIN' MYSELF. JUST BEIN' WITH YA IS ENOUGH FOR ME.

WELL, I'M NOT GONNA LIE TO YA.
I DON'T KNOW.
I GUESS I JUST FEEL LIKE I WANNA BE UP-FRONT AND TELL YA THAT STUFF.
...THE HECK? WHY'RE YA COMIN' OUT WITH THAT ALL OF A SUDDEN...?
IT'D BE GREAT IF I COULD DO THE SAME...
WOUND UP SAWIN' LOGS, HUH...?
EYES ROLLED TO THE BACK OF YER HEAD AN' ALL.
ZZZZZ...
ZZZZZ...



...

THAT'S FROM OUR GRADE SCHOOL GRADUATION CEREMONY...

SO ME AN' HIKARU'VE ALWAYS BEEN TOGETHER.

HIKARU WAS THE ONLY KID IN THE VILLAGE AROUND MY AGE.

WHAT'S WITH THAT FACE?

WHAT A GOOF...

WHY'M I SO CALM ABOUT THIS?

WHY'M I SO CALM

BUT EVEN SO...

YOU'RE ALREADY DEAD.

THE HIKARU FROM THAT PICTURE IS GONE.

JUST ME...

WHY'M I SO CALM ABOUT THIS?

THE HIKARU FROM THAT PICTURE IS GONE.

NOW IT'S JUST ME... JUST ME...

12:45

Rie Kurebayashi

Send a message

→ あ か さ

た な は 空白

ABC ま や ら 改行

^^ わ 、。?!

Hey

Read 12:50

YOSHIKI-CHAAAN! I GOT SOMETHIN' I'D LIKE YA TA BRING TO YER MAMA...

OH...

YES, MA'AM.

THMP

THMP

THMP

CREAK

PING

YAWN...

HM...?

13:07

Rie Kurebayashi >
Feel like talking now?

...WHO...

...IS THIS?

CHAPTER 5 END

YOU EAT A LOT.
HE SAYS THAT, BUT HE EATS A FAIR AMOUNT TOO
EATS A LOT

YOSHIKI ON DAYS OFF
WILL SLEEP FOREVER IF LEFT TO IT
OFTEN WATCHES VIDEOS OF ANTS AND THINGS
HUNGRY
STRETCHED OUT BY HIKARU
CAN'T DO WITHOUT STOMACH MEDICINE ON HAND
GROWING PAINS

CHAPTER 6

13:21

> Rie Kurebayashi

Sorry !! 13:16

I'll be there in 5 min 13:16

ASAP 13:20

BIP

OH!

THERE YOU ARE!

HAAH...

GOOD-NESS! I'M SO SORRY FOR GETTIN' HERE A LITTLE LATE...

IT'S HOT OUT, SO WHY DON'T WE FIND SOMEWHERE WE CAN SIT INSIDE AND GET A BITE? WOULD AMERICA BE ALL RIGHT WITH YA?

レストラン アメリカ

CASUAL DINER AMERICA

IN

CLINK カチャ

SORRY FOR THE WAIT!

カチャン CLINK

WELCOME!

HOW MANY WILL IT BE TODAY?

THNK シン

PARFAITS
AMERICA FRUIT MOUNTAIN
New!
OH MY MY MY MY MY MY MY MY MY MY MY MY!
THEY HAVE A NEW JUMBO PARFAIT !!
UM...
DO YA LIKE SWEETS?
ORDER WHATEVER YA LIKE.

CAN YA TELL ME?

SO WHAT HAPPENED?

THANKS FOR SHARING.
I SEE.
YEAH ...
YER REALLY TRYIN', HUH?

YOU SHOULDN'T BE FEELIN' LIKE YA DESERVE TO BE PUNISHED.

YA GOTTA KEEP IT TOGETHER.

WHY... DO YA SAY THAT?

FACT OF THE MATTER IS, WE'RE THE ONES WHO'RE DESPERATELY CLINGIN' ON TO THE DEAD.

BEATIN' YERSELF UP 'BOUT ALL THIS ONLY SERVES TO EASE THE GUILT YOU PUT ON YERSELF.

THE DEAD DON'T CARE A LICK.

"WE" ...?

BROUGHT THE MOOD DOWN MORE THAN I NEEDED TO THERE.

OH!

SORRY, JUST FORGET ABOUT ALL THAT!

HUH?

OH, NO, IT'S NOTHIN'.

I ASSUMED IT WAS A GIRLFRIEND OR SOMETHIN'...

ANY-WAY...

...YER CLOSE ENOUGH WITH THIS PERSON TO END UP MIXIN' WITH 'EM, RIGHT?

HAVE YA NOTICED THINGS'VE STARTED GETTIN' STRANGE AROUND THE TOWN AN' VILLAGE?

I'LL GET TO THE POINT.

THERE'S BEEN AN UPTICK IN SUSPI-CIOUS INCIDENTS TOO.

THE TOWN AND VILLAGE ARE SLOWLY STARTIN' TO GET ALL SCREWY.

THINGS THAT SHOULDN'T BE ARE SHOWIN' UP.

SOME SORTA DISTORTION HAS FORMED ALL THROUGHOUT THIS AREA...

AH...

I THINK ...

...WHATEVER "IT" IS THAT'S BECOME YER FRIEND IS HAVIN' AN EFFECT ON THINGS.

AS SOON AS I FELT ITS PRESENCE DISAPPEAR FROM THE MOUNTAINS, THE DISTORTION IN THIS AREA SUDDENLY GREW LARGER.

IT FEELS LIKE...A HUGE MASS OF... SOMETHING...

LIKE "HELL" ITSELF...

THAT'S HOW HUGE THAT THING IS...

THIS IS JUST A GUESS...

...BUT IT MIGHT'VE BEEN WHAT WAS KEEPIN' THE DISTORTION CONTAINED IN THE MOUNTAINS ALL THAT TIME.

THERE'S THAT UNNATURAL DEATH THAT HAPPENED NOT LONG AGO IN KUBITACHI TO CONSIDER AS WELL.

CLINK カチャ

CLACK カタン

CLINK カチャ

CLACK カタン

CLINK カチャ

THERE'S SOMETHIN' TERRIBLY EERIE ABOUT THAT TOO...

I FEEL LIKE IT'S RELATED.

RATTLE RATTLE RATTLE ガタガタガタ

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

AND SO I WAS LIKE....

EXCUSE ME...

TO BE HONEST, IT'S ALL SO SCARY IT MAKES ME WANNA LEAVE THIS TOWN.

BUT MY MOTHER-IN-LAW AND DAUGHTER ARE HERE.

...MY OLDEST SON LEFT THIS PLACE LONG AGO, THOUGH...

UM... SO BEFORE ...

.....

...YOU SAID "WE"...

BUT IT DIDN'T WORK OUT.

IN THE END, HE LEFT MY SON WITH A SCAR ON HIS BODY THAT WILL NEVER HEAL FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE.

...MY LATE HUSBAND.

HE CAME BACK ONCE, A LONG TIME AGO.

I JUST WANTED TO BE WITH HIM AGAIN.

IT DIDN'T MATTER WHAT HE WAS.

THAT YA CAN'T KEEP BEIN' WITH YOUR FRIEND LIKE THIS.

...SOME PART OF YOU MUST KNOW IT TOO.

...YEAH, BUT WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO ABOUT IT...?

DRIP

DRIP

DRIP

AND...

I'M SORRY.

I DON'T WANT YA TO END UP LIKE ME...

FSHH

...I FIGURED YOU OUGHTTA KNOW...

...SO YOU CAN MOVE FORWARD.

ENJOY! ♪

HERE'S YER ORDER! ONE AMERICA MEGA-DELUXE MOUNTAIN PRESIDENT!

FLASH

FSH

SLIDE

ガ！

SQUIK

SQUIK

SQUIK

I FORGOT SOMETHIN' IN HERE.

I'LL LEAVE AS SOON AS I FIND IT.

HUH? YER STILL HERE? THERE'S A FACULTY MEETIN' THIS AFTERNOON, SO EVERYONE CAN GO HOME EARLY.

YA DIDN'T KNOW?

MM, OKAY.

ガラガラ...
RATTLE RATTLE

HIKARU'S BEEN LOOKIN' FOR YOU.

SHUT バタン

IF YOU SEE HIM, TELL HIM TA GO HOME WITHOUT ME.

...DON'T WANT TO KILL YOU...

I...

SO THAT MEANS HE COULD KILL ME.

THE DIS-TORTION IN THE VILLAGE.

THAT OLD LADY'S UNNATURAL DEATH.

SOME-THIN' TRAPPED IN THE MOUN-TAINS.

NOU-NUKI-SAMA.

...JUST WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU?

"HIKA-RU"...

Ah!

AH! THERE YOU ARE!

SO YOU CAN MOVE FOR-WARD ...

SO YOU CAN MOVE FOR-WARD ...

YA DIDN'T KNOW THERE WAS A FACULTY MEETIN' TODAY?

LET'S HURRY AN' HEAD HOME.

HUH?

YOU IN A BAD MOOD OR SOMETHIN'?

FSHH

YEAH.

...YOU MIND GOIN' HOME WITHOUT ME TODAY?

GLANCE

55

WHOA! HE'S NOT LAUGHIN' AT MY FUNNY FACE!

SLAP

YOU JUST DON'T KNOW WHEN TO GIVE UP. LEAVE ME ALONE. SERIOUSLY.

HEY, FOR REAL. WHAT'S GOIN' ON?

YER LOOKIN' PRETTY PALE.

...IS IT 'COS OF ME?

OH.

YOU FOR REAL?

WHOA ...

HA HA...

I'M NOT REALLY MAD OR ANYTHIN'.

YA MAD AT ME?

WELL, I MEAN, YER CLEARLY ACTIN' WEIRD WITH ME.

HUH?

...WHAT'RE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT?

...WHAT?

YER BEIN' CREEPY, MAN...

THE HELL? YOU INTERROGATIN' ME NOW?

NO, YOU ARE MAD, THOUGH.

WHAT'S BEEN UP WITH YOU LATELY ...?

ARE YA HIDIN' SOMETHIN' FROM ME?

AND WHAT'S WITH YOU EXCHANGIN' MESSAGES WITH SOME STRANGER?

OKAY, THEN WHY DIDJA GO INTO TOWN LAST WEEKEND?

EITHER WAY...

...DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU EVERYTHIN'?

WHA ...!?

HOW'D YOU...?

...YER SAYIN' THAT LIKE IT WAS YOU BACK THEN.

BEFORE?

IF YOU'VE GOT SOMETHIN' YOU WANNA SAY TO ME, THEN—

BUT I'M PRETTY SURE WE USED TO TALK ABOUT ALMOST EVERYTHIN' BEFORE!

SO...

IT'S 'COS I'M NOT THE REAL HIKARU?

...SO THAT'S WHAT THIS IS ABOUT?

...I'M NOT ENOUGH FOR YOU.

THAT'S IT, AIN'T IT?

HEY...!

Y—

OF COURSE YER NOT!

YOU!

THE WAY YOU SOUND, THE WAY YOU LOOK, THE WAY YOU TALK— IT'S ALL EXACTLY LIKE HIKARU...

...BUT YOU'RE NOT HIKARU ...!!!!

YER RIGHT.

SORRY.

HAAAH...
HAAAH...

...JUST HOW IT IS.

THAT'S...

GRIP...

OW... HE'S HURTIN' ME...

'COS YOU'RE MY FIRST...

BUT I'M... USELESS WITHOUT YOU, YOSHIKI.

...WHAT'S REALLY MY FEELINGS OR HIS AT THIS POINT...

...UGH, I... JUST DON'T KNOW...

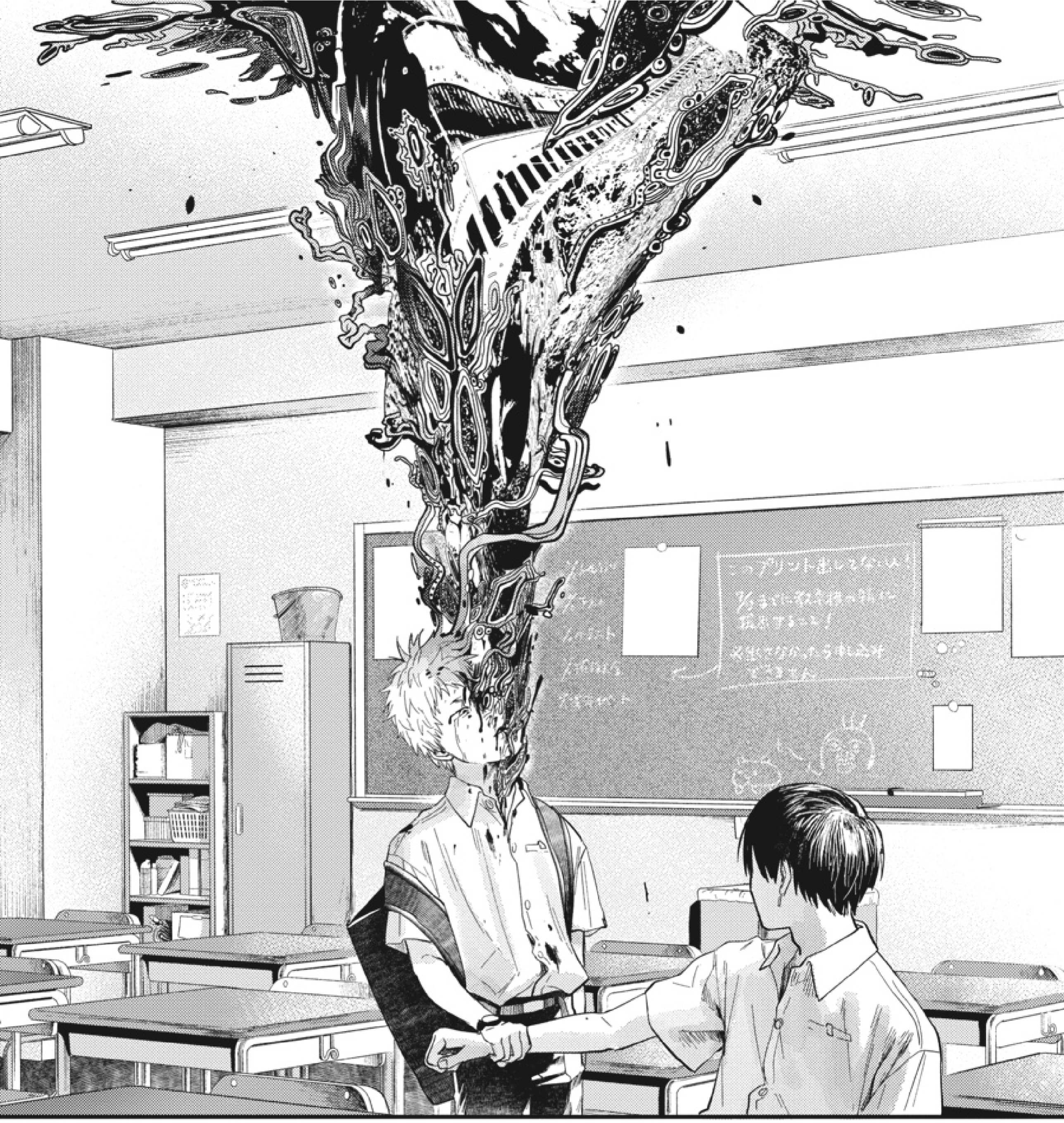
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?

THIS IS SO HARD...

I KNOW IT AIN'T RIGHT, BUT I STILL LIKE YOU!

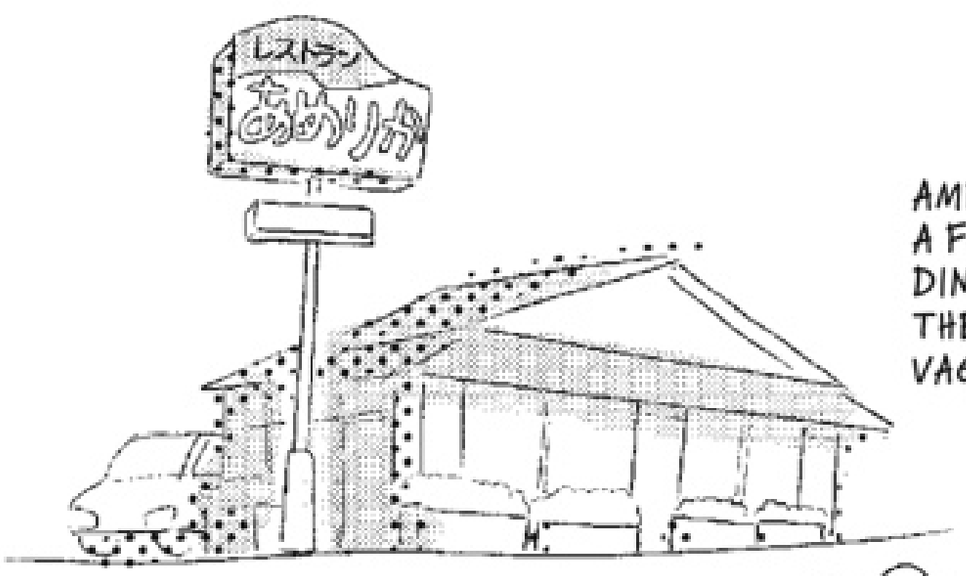
AND I CAN'T STOP MY FEEL-INGS !!!

SPLRT


YOU
MUST KNOW
IT TOO.

THAT
YOU
CAN'T
KEEP
BEIN'
WITH
YER
FRIEND
LIKE
THIS.

VOLUME 1 END


レストラン
AMERICA:
A FAMILY-STYLE CASUAL DINER IN KIBOGAYAMA TOWN. THE DECOR AND DISHES ARE VAGUELY AMERICAN.

HEY, YO-SHIKI.
SO IT'S "WILL COME," "WILL BE COMING," "WILL HAVE COME," AND THEN?
"WILL HAVE BEEN COMING."

YOSHIKI'S FAMILY
• MOTHER
• FATHER
• LITTLE SIS
HEY, PASS ME THE CLICK-ER.
HIS LITTLE SISTER'S A FIRST-YEAR IN MIDDLE SCHOOL. THEY GET ALONG WELL.

BONUS

HEY, YOU GONNA CUT YER BANGS?

'COS YA CAN'T RELAX UNLESS YER HIDIN' YOUR FACE, RIGHT?

THEY BOTHER ME, THOUGH. FEELS KINDA GLOOMY.

GEEZ, ENOUGH ALREADY. HOW MANY TIMES'RE YA GONNA TELL ME?

...I ALREADY TOLDJA I AIN'T CUTTIN' 'EM. THEY'RE CURTAINS FOR MY FACE.

GLANCE

MASTER+MASTER

AH, YEAH, GUESS SO...

IT'S THE FIRST TIME I'M TELLIN' YA, THOUGH!

YASABURO'S GRANNY SAID SOMETHIN' 'BOUT IT "MAKIN' THE VILLAGE DARKER."

EVERYONE IN THE VILLAGE JUST WON'T SHUT UP 'BOUT MY HAIR. THEY'RE ALWAYS ASKIN' ME TO CUT IT.

THIS VILLAGE'S ALWAYS BEEN DARK.

MAYBE THEY THINK MY BANGS ARE GONNA KILL MY PARENTS OR SOMETHIN'.

...WHAT DON'T YOU LIKE ABOUT YER FACE?

SO, LIKE...

YER MOLES AN' STUFF?

THAT TOO...

I THINK YOU'VE GOT A HANDSOME FACE.

HUH? WHY'S THAT?

HOW 'BOUT I CUT IT!!?

OH, I KNOW!

HEY, DON'T TOUCH ME—

YA CAN'T!

NEVER!!

SOME-TIME IN THE PAST

HEY.

C'MON.

HEY, YA SURE YA GOT THIS?

AH!

YA REALLY SURE?

HIKARU...

HEY.

YEAH, IT'S FINE!

I-I THOUGHT THAT WOULD GO BETTER THAN IT DID... HA-HA...

OH MAN, THAT WAS REALLY BAD. SORRY...

NO?

AWW, ALL RIGHT.

BDMP ドキ

BDMP ドキ

BUT...

...I BET THEY GET IN YER WAY WHEN YER STUDYIN'.

YOU'LL RUIN YER EYES IF YA KEEP THAT UP...

.....

JAPANESE CLASSICS
...THE HECK'RE THOSE?

GAB

YEP.

GAB

...CUTE BARRETTES?

GAB

THIS IS A JOKE, RIGHT?

YER GONNA LAUGH WHEN YA SEE ME WITH THESE ON.

I'M GIVIN' 'EM TO YA!

HOW 'BOUT USIN' 'EM TO PIN YER HAIR BACK?

MINCE-ANIKI'S FACE IS MORE LIKE SOME SEASONED ACTOR, THOUGH.

THEY LOOK LIKE MINCE-ANIKI, DON'T THEY?

I FOUND 'EM AT MION MALL.

HM? WHAT'S UP?

HI-KARU!

GLANCE ちら

BUT THERE'S NO WAY I CAN WEAR THESE AT SCHOOL...

WHAT CLASS WE GOT NEXT?

HUH? GOOD QUES-TION...

HEH.

SKWAK SKWAK SKWAK SKWAK

SKWAK SKWAK SKWAK SKWAK

SKWAK SKWAK SKWAK SKWAK

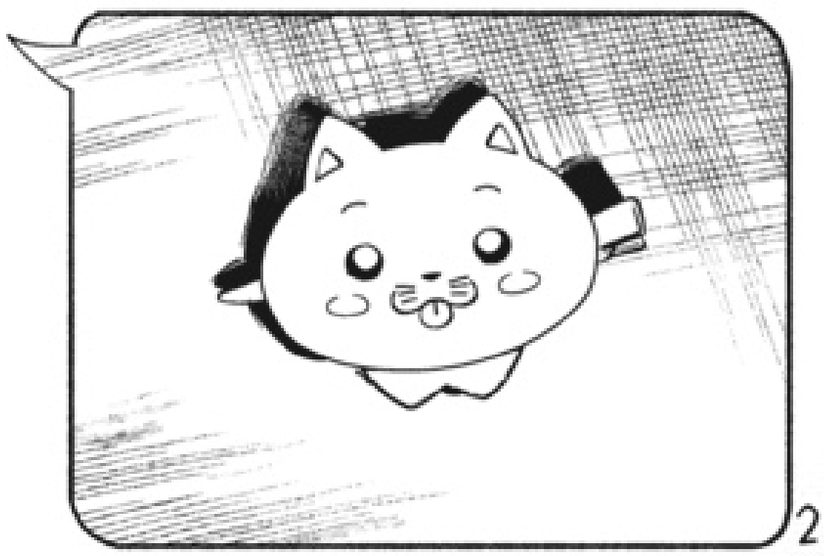
SKWAK SKWAK SKWAK SKWAK

Hikaru

Has sent you image

ポコン PING

> Hikaru



20:10

Hey 20:10

Just noticed 20:10

Had this thing on all day and even went to club with it 20:11

Don't make me cuter than I already am 20:11

HM?

You gotta wear it!

OH.

SO HE LEFT IT ON ALL THIS TIME.

WHAT'RE YOU WEARIN'?

HEY...

.....

UH... SERI-OUSLY, WHAT IS THAT?

BONUS

END.

...NO.

TCH!

THAT'S ACTUALLY A PRETTY POPULAR CHARACTER... YOU GONNA USE IT? GIVE IT TO ME.

TRANSLATION NOTES

COMMON HONORIFICS

***-san*:** The Japanese equivalent of Mr./Mrs./Miss. If a situation calls for politeness, this is the fail-safe honorific.
***-sama*:** Conveys great respect; may also indicate that the social status of the speaker is lower than that of the addressee.
***-kun*:** Used most often when referring to boys, this indicates affection or familiarity. Occasionally used by older men among their peers, but it may also be used by anyone referring to a person of lower standing.
***-chan*:** An affectionate honorific indicating familiarity used mostly in reference to girls; also used in reference to cute persons or animals regardless of gender.
no honorific: Indicates familiarity or closeness; if used without permission or reason, addressing someone in this manner would constitute an insult.
-niisan, nii-san, aniki, etc: A term of endearment meaning "big brother" that may be more widely used to address any young man who is like a brother, regardless of whether he is related or not.

GENERAL

Hikaru: The Chinese character for Hikaru's name means "light."

PAGE 1

Cicadas: The cries of cicadas are pervasive throughout this volume. Cicadas' cries are infamously loud, and the sound is synonymous with summer in Japan.

PAGE 13

"Hikaru": Once Yoshiki realizes that the Hikaru in front of him is not the same friend he grew up with, he starts distinguishing between the two of them in his mind. The Japanese text reflects that shift by changing the writing system used for Hikaru's name. When Yoshiki refers to his friend, the text shows the Chinese character for Hikaru, but when he refers to the new "Hikaru," the text uses *katakana*, another one of Japan's three writing systems, which is primarily used for words with foreign origins.

Interestingly, when characters who are unaware of Hikaru's identity say his name, the text uses the Chinese character.

TRANSLATION NOTES
(CONTINUED)

PAGE 26

Katsu: *Katsu* refers to a meat cutlet that has been breaded and fried. The most well-known *katsu* is probably *tonkatsu*, or pork *katsu*. It is commonly eaten with rice as well as sold as a portable snack. The types of *katsu* sold here include *tonkatsu* (pork *katsu*) *roosukatsu* (pork loin *katsu*), ham *katsu*, *menchikatsu* (mincemeat *katsu*), and *gyuukatsu* (beef *katsu*). They also sell Japanese-style croquettes (*korokke*), which are breaded and fried mashed potatoes with ground meat.

PAGE 29

Mince-aniki: A nickname created by combining the words mincemeat and *aniki*. The reference to mincemeat likely comes from the fact that the butcher often feeds the cat. *Aniki*, or "older brother," is how delinquents or *yakuza* families are said to refer to the top dog, so animals with gruff-looking faces are sometimes lovingly referred to as *aniki*.

PAGE 35

Emil: Emil is a character from the short story "Das Nachtpfauenauge" by Hermann Hesse. This story is commonly part of the language arts curriculum in Japanese middle schools, making it familiar to many Japanese people. One of the most famous lines from this story starts with the character Emil saying something to the effect of "I see, I see," and it seems Yoshiki got his nickname from adopting that same verbal quirk.

Afterword

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR BUYING THIS BOOK. I PUT A LOT OF EFFORT INTO IT, SO IT WOULD MAKE ME HAPPY TO KNOW THAT YOU ENJOYED IT.

MOKUMOKUREN

Next Volume Preview

...I'm sorry.

It **looks...**

...just like *he did, and yet...*

It's
dangerous.

It's
dangerous,
but...

THE SUMMER
HIKARU
DIED

continues in Volume 2...

THE SUMMER HIKARU DIED

MOKUMOKUREN

1

TRANSLATION: AJANI OLOYE

LETTERING: ABIGAIL BLACKMAN

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

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